(b) the amount utilised by the State Government during the above period; and

(c) the details of the grant to be allotted to Tamil Nadu for the development of solar energy during the current financial year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR): (a) Total Central grants of Rs. 93.75 lakhs and Rs. 688.99 lakhs were released under various programmes of the Ministry for promotion of solar energy in the State of Tamil Nadu during the years, 2002-03 and 2003-04, respectively.

(b) The utilisation certificates in respect of these grants are yet to be received.

(c) The Government arranged for the supply of 4000 solar lanterns costing Rs. 132 lakhs for distribution in Tsunami affected areas of Tamil Nadu. In addition, a grant of Rs. 4.15 lakhs has been released for promotion of solar thermal energy systems in Tamil Nadu during the current financial year.

Closure of regional offices

†2414. SHRI BALAVANT *ALIAS* BALAPTE:
SHRI RUDRA NARAYAN PANY:

Will the Minister of NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Ministry has decided to close all its regional offices;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether there is likelihood of any kind of adverse effect on the States where these regional offices would be closed;

(d) whether it is a fact that some States have expressed their displeasure over the decision of closure of these offices; and

(e) if so, Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR): (a) to (e) The regional offices of this Ministry were set up in some selected states as a part of a deployment strategy to, by and large, fill in the gap

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

that had arisen as a consequence of accelerated demand for renewable energy systems/devices that emanated out of either a positive environment that had been created in the State or on account of affirmative action on this Ministry's part. Moreover, most Renewable Energy State Nodal Agencies did not exist at the time of creation of regional offices. Most objectives set for the regional offices have been attained. Since this Ministry is facing an acute shortage of scientific manpower, the need, therefore, has been felt to rationalize the regional office set up. However, in effecting the rationalization, it would be ensured that progress in the States is tracked on a continuous basis, even through the Renewable Energy State Nodal Agencies that have been specifically set up for the purpose.

Potential of wind energy in Uttaranchal

†2415. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether any survey has been carried out regarding the wind energy generation potential in the State of Uttaranchal;

(b) if so, the areas in the State which have the potential of wind energy generation;

(c) whether any scheme has been formulated for exploitation of the potential; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Wind resource assessments have been carried out at 11 locations in Uttaranchal and one potential site has been identified in the State, namely Bachelikhal in Tehri Garhwal district of Uttaranchal, which is considered suitable for installation of wind power project of 2 MW capacity.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. The Ministry has been implementing a Wind Energy Programme which aims at utilizing wind energy mainly for generation of grid power. The programme provides for partial financial assistance for undertaking survey and assessment of wind resources, setting up of limited demonstration projects and support to Centre for Wind Energy Technology (C-WET). Fiscal incentives such as accelerated depreciation, concessional customs duty on certain components, term loan from Indian Renewable

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.